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City Hall now on National Register

On March 1, 1983, Susan M. Zacher, National Register Coordinator of the Bureau for Historic Presevation of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, notified Mayor Fred J. Mancuso, Carbondale Historical Society president S. Robert Powell, and Lackawanna County Commission Robert W. Pettinato that, as of January 6, 1983, Carbondale City Hall was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Created by an Act of Congress in 1966, the National Register of Historic Places is maintained by the National Park Service according to strict criteria. It serves as the official inventory of districts, objects, sites, buildings and structures that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture.

When asked his reaction to the listing of City Hall on the National Register, S. Robert Powell responded: "This is wonderful news. Carbondale City Hall is one of the most important buildings in northeastern Pennsylvania. We are very pleased that the architectural and historical importance of City Hall have been acknowledged on the national level. Given the 25 percent investment tax credit available to owners of National Register buildings who do certified rehabilitations of those buldings, we are now very optimistic that Carbondale City Hall will be completely restored."

Powell further remarked that historic preservation can serve as an important stimulus to the economic redevelopment and growth of the city of Carbondale. In his remarks, Powell cited James G. Watt, Secretary of the Interior, who, following the passage of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, made the following remarks on the importance of historic buildings to a community, particularly in the area of economic growth and redevelopment:

"The historic buildings in a community are tangible links with the nation's past that help provide a sense of identity and stability that is most often missing in this era of constant change. By highlighting a community's roots and unique character, historic preservation reinforces the traditional American values of neighborhood and family. Preservation is an anchor that keeps communities together and reestablishes pride and economic vitality. The Department of the Interior recognizes that the goals of historic preservation, community development and economic growth are compatible and intends to further the use of preservation as a tool to help revitalize communities and strengthen the nation's economy."

Carbondale City Hall is a detached, masonry (brick and Pennsylvania bluestone) building, in the Romanesque Revival Style, composed of a tower, a three-story wing and a two-story wing. The building was designed by Truman I. Lacey of Binghamton, and constructed in 1893-1894, under the architect's supervision, by W.D. Stevens of Binghamton and George H. Tryon of Carbondale. The dressed bluestone and trimmings for the buildings were supplied by Frank Carlucci of Scranton, from his quarry at Nicholson.

Present-day City Hall is Carbondale's third City Hall. Carbondale's first City Hall, a rectangular wooden building in the Greek Revival style, was erected in 1852 on the site not occupied by the two-story wing of Carbondale City Hall. The 1852 building was destroyed by a fire on February 14, 1860, and was replaced by a two-story brick building, which was erected in 1860 on the same site. The 1860 buliding is still standing in downtown Carbondale: it is the two-story wing of present-day City Hall. In 1893-1894, Truman I. Lacey designed a new interior and a new roof for the 1860 building and incorporated it into his design for present-day Carbondale City Hall.